

On behalf of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) and its Board of Directors, I write to express our support of BellSouth Corporation's long distance application in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina. Allowing BellSouth to compete with other long distance carriers in these states will bring greater choice and result in lower prices that will benefit all consumers. Many Hispanic small business owners rely on goods, services and relationships in Latin America and Mexico. Understanding this, BellSouth has implemented long distance plans to suit the needs of these entrepreneurs with affordable pricing. In Georgia and Louisiana, for example, BellSouth allows small business owners to choose from five domestic calling plans; three international calling plans; and one plan that is a combination of both. Hispanic small businesses and entrepreneurs that work from home in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina would greatly benefit from increased competition in the advanced telecommunications market. BellSouth's entry into the long-distance market will spur economic development. Upgrading the network infrastructure and expanding long-distance services will create new jobs and business opportunities for Hispanic workers and businesses in the aforementioned five states. As a result, thousands of information and technology jobs could potentially be created in secondary and tertiary markets of the new economy. Allowing BellSouth to enter the long distance market will create incentives for all long distance companies to go "the last mile" and bridge the still-present digital divide. They are, after all, a trusted and respected name that is committed to ensuring all customers access to a robust telecommunications system. In the Hispanic community BellSouth has committed themselves to the power and influence of the Latino community. For example, in recent years BellSouth has been named by FORTUNE magazine as one of the Top 20 best companies in the nation for Asian, Blacks and His!

panics and has also named by Hispanic Magazine as one of the 100 Companies Providing the Most Opportunities for Hispanics.

USHCC trusts that you will look favorably upon the application of BellSouth to become a long distance carrier. The quality of BellSouth's local services lends greatly to the promise of its long distance service quality. A new alternative in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina is something we would appreciate and welcome, and something we hope you will too.

Sincerely,

George Herrera

President and Chief Executive Officer

U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

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